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| **Council Working Group on WSIS and SDG 36th meeting – Virtual meeting, 28-29 January 2021** |  |
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|  | **Document CWG-WSIS&SDG-36/20-E** |
| **29 January 2021** |
| **English only** |
| Chairman, Council Working Group on WSIS&SDG (CWG-WSIS&SDG) | |
| **Summary of the 36th meeting** | |
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| **Summary**  This report highlights the main outcomes of the 36th meeting of the Council Working Group on WSIS&SDG held virtually on 28-29 January 2021 in line with [PP-18 Resolution 140 (Rev. Dubai, 2018](https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-wsis/Documents/Resolution-140-PP18.pdf)) and [Council Resolution 1332 (Modified 2019)](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0137/en).  **Action required**  To consider documents and prepare inputs to the next CWG-WSIS&SDG meeting.  **References**  [UNGA Resolution A/RES/70/125](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/125); [UNGA Resolution A/RES/70/1](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1); [UNGA Resolution A/70/299](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/299); [UNGA Resolution A/70/684](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/684); UNGA Resolution [A/RES/73/218](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/218); [UNGA Resolution A/71/212](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/212); [UN ECOSOC Resolution E/RES/2020/212](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/RES/2020/12); [UN ECOSOC Resolution E/RES/2020/12](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/RES/2020/12); [UNGA Resolution A/RES/75/202](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/379/41/PDF/N2037941.pdf?OpenElement); [PP-18 Resolution 140 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)](https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-wsis/Documents/Resolution-140-PP18.pdf); [PP-14 Resolution 140 (Rev. Busan 2014)](https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-wsis/Documents/ITUPP14_RESOLUTION_140.pdf); [PP-10 Resolution 172 (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010)](https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-wsis/Documents/Resolution172-PP10.pdf); [Council Resolution 1332 (Modified 2019)](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0137/en); [Council Resolution 1336 (Modified 2015)](https://www.itu.int/md/S15-CL-C-0113/en); [WTDC 2017 Resolution 30 (REV. Buenos Aires, 2017)](https://www.itu.int/md/D14-WTDC17-C-0115/en) , [WTSA-16 Resolution 75 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016)](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-t/opb/res/T-RES-T.75-2016-PDF-E.pdf); [*Reports of 18th, 19th, 20th,21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th , 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th CWG WSIS meetings*](http://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-wsis/Pages/default.aspx)*;* [*WSIS+10 Statement on the Implementation of the WSIS Outcomes*](http://www.itu.int/net/wsis/implementation/2014/forum/inc/doc/outcome/362828V2E.pdf)*;* [*WSIS+10 Vision for WSIS beyond 2015*](http://www.itu.int/net/wsis/implementation/2014/forum/inc/doc/outcome/362828V2E.pdf)*;* [*Final WSIS Target Review*](http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/wsisreview2014/WSIS2014_review.pdf)*;* [*WSIS+10 Report: ITU’s Ten Year Contribution to the WSIS Implementation and Follow-up (2005-2014)*](https://www.itu.int/en/itu-wsis/Documents/WSIS+10Report.pdf)*.* |

1. **Introduction**

The ITU Council Working Group on WSIS&SDG (CWG-WSIS&SDG) held its 36th meeting virtually on 28-29 January 2021 due to the exceptional COVID-19 situation. The work of the CWG-WSIS&SDG is conducted in line with [PP-18 Resolution 140 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)](https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-wsis/Documents/Resolution-140-PP18.pdf) and based on the [Council Resolution 1332 (Modified 2019)](https://www.itu.int/md/S19-CL-C-0137/en), including the Terms of Reference of the CWG-WSIS&SDG listed in the annex of this Resolution adopted at the ITU Council 2019.

The meeting was attended by more than 150 delegates, representing ITU Member States and Sector Members. The meeting considered 18 documents. Mr. Houlin Zhao, Secretary-General, ITU, delivered the opening remarks at the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Prof. Vladimir Minkin (Russian Federation), the Chairman of CWG-WSIS&SDG. The Vice-Chairs, Ms. Janet Umutesi (Rwanda), Ms. Renata Santoyo (Brazil), Mr. Mansour Al-Qurashi (Saudi Arabia), Prof. Ahma​d Reza Sharafat (Islamic Republic of Iran), and Ms. Aygun Ahmadova (Azerbaijan) were present.

1. **Welcoming Remarks**

**Mr. Houlin Zhao, Secretary-General, ITU**,welcomed all participants to the 36th meeting of CWG-WSIS&SDG. He thanked the Chairman and the Vice-Chairs for their leadership and guidance in the WSIS Process. Mr. Zhao reiterated that ITU has been working with all WSIS stakeholders and Action Line facilitators towards a close alignment between the WSIS process and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He also highlighted that the role of ICTs has become critical during this COVID-19 pandemic.

The Secretary-General invited all participants to the WSIS Forum 2021 that has started with pre-events and will conclude in the final week from 17 to 21 May 2021. Mr. Zhao announced that H.E. Mr. Maxim Parshin, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation, has accepted to help as the Chairman of the WSIS Forum 2021 and thanked the Russian Federation for their engagement in the preparations. Mr. Zhao highlighted that the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2021 (*will take place virtually on 17 May in the framework of WSIS*) will present a unique opportunity for ITU membership to help raise awareness of the importance of ICTs and to share their experiences on digital transformation in challenging times.

Mr. Zhao invited the Group to attend the Second Virtual Meeting of the Open Consultation Process, which will be held virtually on 1 February 2021 at 14:00-15:00 CET. He encouraged participants to be actively involved in all the WSIS Forum 2021 calls for action.

**Mr. Malcolm Johnson, Deputy Secretary-General, ITU**, expressed his appreciation towards the success of the WSIS Forum 2020 and highlighted the key outcomes. He further highlighted that the WSIS Forum 2020 was more inclusive than before with increased participation from stakeholders in different regions, with some sessions held in local languages and within different time zones. As the Chairman of the ITU WSIS&SDG Task Force, he reiterated the commitment of the Task Force in implementing the WSIS Outcomes and aligning the WSIS Action Lines with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Johnson appreciated the engagement and involvement of ITU staff in the WSIS Forum 2020, including the WSIS team interns, for their contributions in making the WSIS Forum 2020 a success. Mr. Johnson called for support from participants to ensure the success of the WSIS Forum 2021.

**Dr. Chaesub Lee, Director, Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), ITU**, informed the Group about the ongoing activities in TSB, including issues related to the WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs. He reiterated that TSB is continuing collaboration with other bureaus, taking into account the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) and the following World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA).

**Ms. Doreen Bogdan, Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), ITU**, highlighted that there are nine years remaining to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. She emphasised the importance of connectivity to achieve all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She reaffirmed the commitment of BDT in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines, in particular, C2, C5 and C6 where ITU is the lead facilitator. She further informed that BDT has been working in advancing the UN Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation.

Ms. Bogdan also brought attention to the WTDC 2021 under the theme of “Connecting the Unconnected to Achieve Sustainable Development*”* that will take place in Addis Ababa.

The Chairman thanked the Elected Officials for their interventions and invited Directors of BDT and TSB to kindly present the draft Report on implementation of the WSIS Outcomes by ITU-D and ITU-T, prepared in accordance to the relevant resolutions, intended for consideration at WTSA-20 and WTDC-21 for the next CWG-WSIS&SDG meeting.

1. **Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda ([CWGWSIS36/1(Rev.1)](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/md/21/cwgwsis36/c/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0001!R1!MSW-E.docx)) reflecting the distribution of the documents was adopted as drafted.

1. **Adoption of the time management plan**

The time management plan was adopted as proposed.

1. **Update on relevant activities related to the WSIS process and SDGs**
   1. **Outcomes of the CSTD 2020 and plans for the inter-sessional panel for 2021** 
      1. Mr. Peter Major, Chairman, CSTD, provided a briefing on the outcomes of the CSTD 2020-2021 Inter-sessional Panel of the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development, which took place in a virtual format from 18 to 22 January 2021. The Inter-sessional Panel addressed the two priority themes: (i) *Using science, technology and innovation to close the gap on Sustainable Development Goal 3, on good health and well-being*; and (ii) *Harnessing blockchain for sustainable development: prospects and challenges*. In addition, the Panel examined issues related to the follow-up to the outcomes on the WSIS.
      2. He informed the Group that the twenty-fourth session of the CSTD will be held in May 2021.
      3. The Group thanked Mr. Peter Major, Chairman, CSTD, for the briefing and asked CSTD to publish a version zero of the Resolution on “[Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society](https://unctad.org/Sections/un_cstd/docs/ecosoc_res2012d2_en.pdf)” in advance before the twenty-fourth session of the CSTD.
      4. The Group requested the WSIS Secretariat and the CSTD Secretariat to coordinate and consult the dates of the WSIS Forum 2021 and the CSTD 2021 session.
   2. **Outcomes of the Internet Governance Forum 2020**
      1. Mr. Peter Major, Chairman, CSTD, provided a briefing on the outcomes of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) 2020. It was informed that the IGF 2020 was held entirely online for the first time, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the overarching theme, “Internet for human resilience and solidarity”, the IGF 2020 provided a substantive multistakeholder platform for engaged and informed discussions about policy issues pertaining to the Internet, amplifying digital cooperation and how the Internet can support and fulfil the nexus of respecting human rights and achieving the SDGs.
      2. The Group was informed that the IGF 2021 will be hosted by the Government of Poland in Katowice from 6 to 10 December 2021 under the theme of “Internet United”. Members of the Group were invited to participate in the event.
   3. **Update on the** **UN Secretary-General Roadmap for Digital Cooperation**
      1. Ms. Yu Ping Chan, Senior Programme Officer/Team Leader, Digital Cooperation, Office of the Under-Secretary General and Special Advisor on Preparations for the 75th UN Anniversary & the High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation highlighted the Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, which was issued in June 2020. She provided updates on follow up activities to implement the Roadmap, which presented a set of recommended actions for the international community to help ensure all people are connected, respected, and protected in the digital age.
      2. The Secretariat informed that ITU has been actively engaged in and contributing to the UN Secretary-General’s activities on digital cooperation. Several activities were carried out to support the preparation of the UN Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation (A/74/821), including (i) Digital Cooperation Roundtables on Global Connectivity and Digital Capacity Building, co-chaired with UNICEF and UNDP; and (ii) a series of High-Level events on Digital Cooperation during the UNGA in September and webinars on “Digital Cooperation during COVID-19 and beyond”. Working with multistakeholder partners, ITU will continue to play its leading role to implement the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation by further enhancing digital cooperation and collaboration.
   4. The Group noted the information presented with appreciation.
2. **ITU’s activities related to WSIS Process**

The following documents were presented by the Secretariat:

* 1. **Outcomes of the WSIS Forum 2020** ([CWGWSIS36/2](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0002/en)): This document reflects the outcomes of the WSIS Forum 2020. The WSIS Forum 2020 was convened in a virtual format for twelve weeks (June-September 2020), in light of the global health crisis and extensive travel restrictions due to COVID-19 pandemic. The Forum garnered a lot of interest and excitement worldwide – with a cumulative attendance of over 15,000 attendees from around 150 countries who took part in about 160 virtual sessions with 850 different speakers. All the outcomes and publications of the WSIS Forum 2020 are available at: <http://www.itu.int/go/wsis2020outcomes>.
  2. **WSIS Forum 2021 (preparations)** ([CWGWSIS36/3](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0003/en)): This document provides an update on the ongoing preparations towards the WSIS Forum 2021, with its final week scheduled on 17-21 May 2021 and virtual pre-events starting from January 2021. The overall theme of the Forum is “ICTs for Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Societies and Economies (WSIS Action Lines for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals)”. The agenda and programme of the WSIS Forum 2021 will be aligned with the WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs, highlighting the contributions and impact of ICTs to achieve the SDGs by 2030, particularly efforts and initiatives of digital cooperation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Attention was drawn towards the ongoing calls for action, as follows:

* + 1. Official submissions to the WSIS Secretariat on the Thematic Aspects and Innovations on the Format to be made by filling out a form via [www.wsis.org/forum](http://www.wsis.org/forum) by 8 March 2021 (this form is also to be used to request workshops and exhibition spaces).
    2. Open call for nominations for WSIS Forum 2021 Multistakeholder [High‐Level Track Facilitators](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2020/Home/Consultations): Deadline: 8 March 2021.
    3. WSIS Photo Contest 2021 submissions: Deadline: 8 March 2021.
    4. WSIS Forum 2021 activities and Special Tracks: Hackathon, WSIS TalkX, Regional engagement and outreach, ICTs and Youth, ICTs and Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and Specific Needs, ICTs and Older Persons, ICTs and Gender Mainstreaming, ICTs and Sports, Cybersecurity, and Extended Reality.
    5. The WSIS Forum 2021 Open Consultation Process (OCP) is structured in five phases. Members of the Group were invited to join the upcoming Second Virtual Meeting (the third phase) of the OCP on 1 February 2021 at 14:00-15:00 CET.
  1. **Report: ITU’s contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Outcomes (2020)** ([CWGWSIS36/4](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0004/en)): The Report provides an overview of ITU’s activities and events that contribute to the implementation of the WSIS outcomes during the period of 2020. This annual report provides updates on the tasks carried out by the ITU at the operational and policy level, covering all assigned mandates with reference to the WSIS Process.
  2. **ITU Roadmaps C2, C5 and C6 (updated template)** ([CWGWSIS36/5](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0005/en)): In follow-up to a request by the 35th CWG-WSIS&SDG, the Secretariat presented a new reporting template, which includes three additional columns i.e. (i) evidence-based analysis of the current situation; (ii) expected and achieved results and targets to be achieved; and (iii) COVID-19 response. Feedback from the Group was sought with a view to strengthening the Roadmaps.
  3. **Regional activities towards alignment of WSIS and SDG processes** ([CWGWSIS36/6](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0006/en)):
     1. As a follow-up to the 35th CWG-WSIS&SDG, the Secretariat presented a template ([CWGWSIS36/17](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0017/en)) for regional reporting by the Vice-Chairs of the Group.
     2. The Secretariat provided an oral briefing on WSIS related activities at the regional level ([CWGWSIS36/6](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0006/en)). It was informed that implementation of the WSIS process at the regional level has been growing over the years with active contributions from stakeholders, ITU Regional Offices, and UN Regional Commissions. A series of regional meetings were successfully organised throughout the WSIS Forum 2020 to share regional experiences and activities on promoting the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs. Further, the Secretariat informed that UN ECLAC was nominated as the Chair of the WSIS UN Regional Commissions group for 2020-2021.
  4. **WSIS Stocktaking Process 2020 and 2021** ([CWGWSIS36/7](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0007/en)): A report on the activities of the WSIS Stocktaking process in 2020 was delivered and details about the WSIS Stocktaking 2021 call were provided. All WSIS stakeholders were invited to continue submitting updates and new entries online at [www.wsis.org/stocktaking](http://www.wsis.org/stocktaking). Submitted activities will be reflected in the WSIS Stocktaking Report 2021, which will be released during the final week of the WSIS Forum 2021. A new initiative of the WSIS Stocktaking: *The Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response – ICT Case Repository* was presented. The Group was invited to use materials from this repository and to submit projects related to COVID-19 in response to the ongoing ICT case repository call.
  5. **WSIS Prizes 2020 and 2021** ([CWGWSIS36/8](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0008/en)):The prestigious WSIS Prizes continue to recognize outstanding initiatives from governments, private sector, civil society and academia that support the implementation of WSIS Action Lines for accelerating the SDGs. The 18 WSIS Prize 2020 winners were announced and celebrated in the specially designed virtual ceremony on 7 September 2020. The details of the ongoing call of the WSIS Prizes 2021 were presented.
  6. **UN Group on the Information Society (UNGIS)** ([CWGWSIS36/9](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0009/en)): Updates on the activities of UNGIS were provided. UNCTAD is the Chairman of the UNGIS for the year 2020-2021. UNGIS has initiated the repository of projects by UNGIS members on digital transformation that will be used as a reference guide and repository for UN Agencies to display different implemented initiatives/activities showing the direct impact of the WSIS Action Lines on SDGs ([www.ungis.org](http://www.ungis.org)).
  7. **World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2020 and 2021** ([CWGWSIS36/10](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0010/en)): An update was provided on the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2021 (WTISD-21), highlighting the theme “Accelerating Digital Transformation in challenging times”. The theme reflects the works that ITU has been following up on the recommendations or key actions outlined in the United Nations Secretary-General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation ([A/74/821](https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F74%2F821&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop)) released in June 2020.
  8. **Partnership on Measuring the ICT for Development** ([CWGWSIS36/11](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0011/en)): ITU continues to be an active member of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development and together with UNCTAD and UNDESA is one of the three members of its Steering Committee. An update was provided on recent activities and progress achieved, including the thematic list of ICT indicators for the SDGs.
  9. **WSIS Fund in Trust 2021** ([CWGWSIS36/12](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0012/en)): All ITU membership were encouraged to contribute to the WSIS Fund in Trust for the year 2021. Partnership packages are available online: <https://www.itu.int/go/wsisfund>.
  10. **ITU Sector Study Group activities related to the WSIS and SDG Process** ([CWGWSIS36/13](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0013/en)): The Secretariat briefed the meeting on the strengthened collaboration between the ITU Study Groups and the WSIS Process and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, highlighting the engagement of Study Groups during the WSIS Forum 2020.

1. **The Group considered and discussed with appreciation all contributions forwarded to this meeting and made the following recommendations:**
   1. **Outcomes of the WSIS Forum 2020**
      1. The Group appreciated all efforts made towards the success of the WSIS Forum 2020 and its outcomes and especially emphasized transition from a physical event to a virtual one that resulted in new opportunities, use of innovative virtual tools and increased participation, including from developing countries, in spite of difficulties caused by the pandemic.
      2. The outcomes of the WSIS Forum 2020 in terms of increased participation, partnerships, innovative virtual format, agenda, programme and reports/publications were appreciated.
      3. The Group appreciated the work of the Secretariat with the WSIS Action Line facilitators, in particular the facilitators of the WSIS Action Lines C2, C5 and C6, to include the fifteen year achievements of the implementation (2005-2020), challenges and opportunities in the Action Line Workshops organised at the WSIS Forum 2020.
      4. The Group encouraged new successful initiatives like the ICTs and Older Persons track and the new impactful partnerships created as a result of the track.
      5. The Group appreciated the commitment and support of the contributors to the WSIS Fund in Trust 2020.
   2. **WSIS Forum 2021 (preparations)**
      1. The Group noted:
         1. all updates on the calls for action received towards the preparations of the WSIS Forum 2021;
         2. the deadline to contribute to the Open Consultation Process, including request for workshops/exhibition spaces and speakers is 8 March 2021.
      2. The Secretariat was encouraged to continue strengthening the alignment between the WSIS Action Lines and SDGs in the agenda, programme and outcomes of the WSIS Forum 2021.
      3. The Secretariat was requested to explore additional new online tools to facilitate interaction, networking and collaboration amongst the participants.
      4. ITU Membership was encouraged to participate actively in the WSIS Forum 2021.
   3. **Report: ITU’s contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Outcomes (2020)**
      1. The 2020 report on ITU’s contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Outcomes was noted and appreciated by all stakeholders.
      2. The Group appreciated updates provided by the Secretariat on the WSIS+15 Report prepared in collaboration with all UN agencies facilitating the WSIS Action Lines, also noting that the activities reflected in the report were presented during the WSIS Action Lines Facilitators meeting at the WSIS Forum 2020. Secretariat was requested to publish the report for information and discussion in the next meeting.
      3. The Group encouraged the Secretariat to work closely with BDT, TSB, BR and General Secretariat to input ITU activities and projects reflected in the Report to the WSIS Stocktaking Platform for the benefit of wider WSIS stakeholder community.
      4. The Group invited TSB and BDT to present the draft Report on implementation of the WSIS Outcomes by ITU-T and ITU-D, prepared in close collaboration with the WSIS Secretariat and in accordance with the relevant resolutions, intended for consideration at WTSA-20 and WTDC-21 as an input to the next CWG-WSIS&SDG meeting, taking into account the revised template for ITU Roadmaps C2, C5, and C6 in paragraph 7.4.1.
      5. The Group appreciated the information document ([CWG-WSIS&SDG-36/ INF/2-E](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-INF-0002/en)) presented by the Vice-Chair of CWG WSIS&SDG, Ms. Aygun Ahmadova and requested the Secretariat to rectify hyperlinks to some of the documents and web links listed in the report.
   4. **ITU Roadmaps C2, C5 and C6 (updated template)**
      1. The Group endorsed the revised template for ITU Roadmaps C2, C5 and C6 and recommended to use them for analyzing the implementation and achieved results of the WSIS outcomes for the Action Lines C2, C5 and C6.
   5. **Regional activities towards alignment of WSIS and SDG processes**
      1. The Group encouraged the Secretariat to continue working closely with the ITU Regional Offices and UN Regional Commissions, as well as to explore collaboration with the regional telecommunication organisations and to submit to CWG-WSIS&SDG regional reports of implementation of WSIS outcomes and achieving SDGs with special reflection of the role of ICTs in mitigation of COVID-19 pandemic.
      2. The Group endorsed the template presented for reporting on regional activities towards alignment of WSIS and SDG processes, which is to be used by the Vice-Chairs of the regions to report on their contributions to the implementation of the WSIS Outcomes and alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
   6. **WSIS Stocktaking Process 2020 and 2021**
      1. The Group appreciated all efforts made and updates on the calls for submission received for the global WSIS Stocktaking Report 2021 and for the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response – ICT Case Repository.
      2. ITU Membership was encouraged to participate actively in the WSIS Stocktaking activities and contribute by sharing good practices in responding to COVID-19 pandemic.
      3. The Group invited the Secretariat to use the WSIS Stocktaking platform to streamline and collect updated information from all three ITU sectors and General Secretariat on the implementation of WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs.
      4. The Secretariat was requested to further explore opportunities to enhance the Stocktaking database in collecting the projects from the ground related to the ongoing call for the coronavirus response – ICT Case Repository - under the framework of the WSIS Action Lines and its linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals.
      5. The Secretariat was also requested to promote the collected submissions to the WSIS Stocktaking: COVID-19 ICT Case Repository, and their linkages with the WSIS Action Lines, in various formats, including the virtual WSIS TalkX, dedicated WSIS Forum 2021 sessions, visual presentations, and publications.
   7. **WSIS Prizes 2020 and 2021**
      1. The Group appreciated all efforts made and updates on the calls for submission received for the WSIS Prizes 2021 and noted that the deadline to contribute is extended until 1 February 2021.
      2. The Group appreciated the active participation of the three ITU sectors, including that of the Study Groups, ITU Regional Offices, and others in the WSIS Prizes and good collaboration in sharing databases, projects, and activities. The Secretariat was requested to further explore collaboration with other ICT-related databases in ITU and outside as well as to further promote good efforts on a global level made by various ICT for development communities through the WSIS Prizes annual awards.
      3. ITU Membership was encouraged to participate actively in the WSIS Prizes 2021.
      4. The Secretariat was requested to explore strengthening communication and outreach to further benefit the global recognition of the WSIS Prizes contest and its awardees.
   8. **UN Group on the Information Society (UNGIS)**
      1. The Group appreciated the good spirit and collaboration of UN Agencies as UNGIS members.
      2. The Group appreciated the work of UNGIS including the contributions to the High-level Political Forum 2020 and welcomed the [UNGIS Dialogue on the Role of Digitalization in the Decade of Action](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/ungis/Content/upload/doc/dialogue2020/dtlstictinf2020d3_en.pdf).
      3. The Group expressed its appreciation to WSIS team for redesigning the UNGIS website making it more interactive and user friendly.
   9. **World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2020 and 2021**
      1. The Secretariat provided updates on the preparations towards the WTISD 2021 and informed that a Circular Letter will be sent shortly containing the Calls to Action for ITU membership, containing information on the dedicated website and details for submitting initiatives from ITU membership.
      2. The Group was invited to actively participate in commemorating the theme of WTISD 2021 throughout the year with national, regional, and international initiatives to accelerate digital transformation according to the guidelines that will be provided by ITU.
      3. The Group requested the Secretariat to post the Calls to Action as soon as possible.
   10. **Partnership on Measuring the ICT for Development**
       1. The Group noted the report on activity of Partnership on Measuring the ICT for Development.
       2. The Group encouraged the Secretariat to organise a workshop at the WSIS Forum 2021 and share the outcomes in the next CWG-WSIS&SDG.
   11. **WSIS Fund in Trust 2021**
       1. Membership and all WSIS stakeholders were invited to contribute to the WSIS Fund in Trust and to explore the WSIS Forum 2021 partnership packages presented by the Secretariat.
   12. **ITU Sector Study Group activities related to the WSIS and SDG Process**
       1. The Group appreciated the continuing work between the ITU Sector Study Groups and the WSIS process.
       2. Chairman of the ITU-D Study Group 2 informed that ITU-D Study Groups were engaged in the activities of WSIS Forum 2020 by organizing multiple special sessions and webinars on topics of interest, including how ICTs can be utilized to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 (e-Health), as well as being part of the WSIS High-Level track (e-Education). He emphasized that such activities provided enhanced visibility for ITU-D Study Groups, for which the Group was thankful.
       3. The Study Groups were encouraged to actively contribute to all activities and calls for action of the WSIS process, including the WSIS Forum, WSIS Stocktaking, and WSIS Prizes.
2. **WSIS Activities related to COVID-19 Response (**[CWGWSIS36/14](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0014/en)**)**
   1. The Group noted with appreciation the efforts made by the Secretariat for providing opportunities for stakeholders to partner and collaborate during COVID-19.
   2. The Group appreciated the work and contributions of WSIS stakeholders to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and stressed the importance of digital connectivity, innovation, and global cooperation for sustainable development in the context of the COVID-19 recovery.
   3. Based on inputs from stakeholders, the Secretariat was requested to coordinate an electronic reference toolkit that will assist stakeholders in responding effectively to COVID-19 pandemic, under the framework of the WSIS Action Lines and the SDGs.
   4. The Group welcomed initiatives by the ITU and others to help stakeholders tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. It noted that the Council Working Group (Internet) would hold a public consultation on “The role of the Internet and international Internet-related public policy in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 and possible future pandemics” and invited the Secretariat and all WSIS stakeholders to contribute to the consultation to help draw together experience and lessons learned for the future.
3. **Discussion on the Overall Review on the implementation of the WSIS Outcomes: WSIS Beyond 2025**
   1. The Secretariat was requested to provide appropriate consultations with the partner UN agencies for implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action.
   2. The Secretariat was requested to consult with UNGIS members and other stakeholders to celebrate the implementation of 20 years of Geneva Plan of Action at the WSIS Forum 2024.
4. **ITU’s activities in relation to 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**
   1. **Updates: High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2021** ([CWGWSIS36/15](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0015/en))
      1. An oral update was provided on the High-level Political Forum 2021, noting the dates, theme, SDG to be reviewed in-depth, the 44 countries presenting their Voluntary National Reviews and foreseen ITU contributions and activities. It was noted that the theme of HLPF 2021 will continue to focus on “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”. The meeting will take place on 6-15 July 2021 under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, including the three-day ministerial meeting on 13-15 July 2021. The format is still to be confirmed. A request to Member States presenting VNRs was made to ensure highlighting in their Voluntary National Review, the importance of ICT for sustainable development as a cross-cutting enabler and accelerator to achieve the SDGs. Collaboration from Members States for organizing a side event at HLPF are also welcomed.
   2. **ITU Council contribution to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2021** ([CWGWSIS36/16](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0016/en))
      1. Noting and responding to the [letter from President of the ECOSOC](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CWGWSIS35-INF-0001/en) requesting ITU Council to provide substantive inputs to the 2021 HLPF on the theme, the Group were invited to consider and endorse the draft input of ITU Council to HLPF to be presented to the Chair of Council to HLPF. The deadline for submission is 15 March 2021.
      2. The Group appreciated the document presented by the Secretariat.
      3. The Secretariat was requested to:
         1. provide, in annex as per past practice, additional information on the ITU activities related to SDGs, especially SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 17 and other relevant activities that focused and build on the expertise of the ITU by the 5th of February and make it available on the CWG WSIS&SDGs website; and
         2. create a correspondence group under the auspices of CWG-WSIS&SDG open for all interested group members for the consideration of the ITU input to HLPF-21 with a target to prepare an agreed text of the draft of the ITU input to HLPF-21 up to 20 February 2021 that shall be posted for comments at the CWG-WSIS&SDG website by the deadline of 1 March 2021. The CWG-WSIS&SDG management team shall consider and combine all comments received and send the consolidated text to the Council Chairman by 5 March 2021.
5. **Contribution by the Russian Federation: Comments to the ITU Council Contribution to the HLPF 2021** ([CWGWSIS36/18](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CWGWSIS36-C-0018/en))
   1. The Russian Federation presented the document containing proposals to the draft input of ITU Council Contribution to the HLPF 2021.
   2. The Group supported proposals of the Russian Federation and encouraged the Secretariat to follow the guidance in 10.2.2.
6. **CWG-WSIS&SDG Report to Council**

The Secretariat was requested to provide a short version of this report to submit to Council 2021.

1. **Other business**

There were no other matters raised in the meeting.

1. **Concluding Remarks** 
   1. Closing the meeting, the Chairman extended his personal thanks to all the ITU Membership who participated in the work of the 36th meeting of CWG-WSIS&SDG and thanked the Vice-Chairs, Ms. Janet Umutesi (Rwanda), Ms. Renata Santoyo (Brazil), Mr. Mansour Al-Qurashi (Saudi Arabia), Prof. Ahma​d Reza Sharafat (Islamic Republic of Iran), Ms. Aygun Ahmadova (Azerbaijan) and especially all who contributed to the work of CWG-WSIS&SDG and WSIS Process. Appreciations were expressed towards Mr. Houlin Zhao, Secretary-General, ITU, Mr. Malcolm Johnson, Deputy Secretary-General, ITU, Dr. Chaesub Lee, Director TSB, and Ms. Doreen Bogdan, Director, BDT. Appreciations were also expressed for assistance by Chief of SPM, Mr. Yushi Torigoe, Head of CSD Mr. Catalin Marinescu and the Secretariat Ms. Gitanjali Sah, Mr. Vladimir Stankovic, Mr. Michael Kioy, Ms. Ruth Sidabutar, Mr. Mario Castro Grande, Mr. Martin Schaaper, and Ms. Jeoung Hee Kim.
   2. The Group expressed its thanks to Prof. Vladimir Minkin, Chairman of the CWG-WSIS&SDG, for his able chairmanship and guidance.